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Historical sketch of the
First Presbyterian Church

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Samuel Agnew, Esq.
Respects J. G. S.

Cranbury N. J.

HISTORICAL DISCOURSE,

BY

REV. JOSEPH G. SYMMES.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF THE

First Presbyterian Church,

OF

CRANBURY, N. J.

DELIVERED ON THANKSGIVING DAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1867,

BY

REV. JOSEPH G. SYMMES,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

TRENTON, N. J.

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DEUT. VIII, 2.—“Thou shalt remember all the way
which the Lord thy God led thee.”

NOTE.—I must needs explain the long delay in getting this sketch printed. It has been to afford a longer opportunity to search for facts. But all our early records, as well as all other early records, are so imperfect that many details concerning many things are hopelessly lost. I have done the best I could. It is right to mention that I am indebted to Bishop Odenheimer, and other Episcopal brethren, for courtesies extended in searching for the early history of the Old Church. I deeply regret that I have not been able to find one fact.

JOSEPH G. SYMMES.

Cranbury, April, 1869.

The earliest record we have concerning this region of country, is to the following effect: On the 14th of March, 1682, the Duke of York confirmed the Eastern Division of New Jersey to twenty-four proprietors, whereof John Haywood and Thomas Cooper were two. Within ten days John Haywood conveyed his share to Robert Burnett, who divided his possessions and sold them out in parcels. One of these was granted by Isabella McKinsie to Philip French, of New York city, in 1703, embracing the tract north of the brook, and west of King George's road, as it was afterwards called. The children of Philip French sold their tract to Noah Barton, in 1734, and he sold the part whereon the village now stands to Samuel Leonard, and he again to Peter Wycoff, in the hands of whose descendants a part of that tract has ever since remained.

Thomas Cooper seems to have held the south side of the brook. In 1683, he sold one-half his tract to Sir John Gordon, whose son, Sir Robert Gordon, sold the same to John Rothead, in 1720. In 1736, John Rothead conveyed four and one-half acres on the brook to Thomas Grubbs; doubtless for the erection of a grist mill, for it is recorded that Thomas Grubbs conveyed this same lot, together with a grist mill, to John Collins, in 1741.

How much of a village there was here at that time there are no means of ascertaining; but there is no doubt that the mill was the nucleus around which the village grew up, taking its name from the stream on which the mill stood. When, why, and

by whom the stream was thus named, are questions which it is now impossible to answer.* The settlements appear to have been made in another neighborhood until the mill was erected, when it gathered the growth around itself. The country was very sparsely settled, but the people had not been unmindful of the church and its privileges. There is evidence of their attention to these matters. But the evidence is only to the fact that this community early had a house of worship. The particulars with reference to the earliest church privileges seem to be utterly lost.

The first record I have been able to find is connected with the organization of the Presbytery of New Brunswick. The Synod of Philadelphia, then the only Synod, ordered the erection of this Presbytery in May, 1738. The first meeting was held in New Brunswick, on the second Tuesday of August, 1738—the bounds of the Presbytery including a portion of New Jersey and Staten Island. At this meeting appeared commissioners from Allentown and Cranbury asking for supplies. The one from this place was John Chambers. Gilbert Tennent, whom Whitefield called “that son of thunder,” was appointed to preach at both places. At another meeting, held September 7th, following, Stephen Warner presented a petition from the people of this neighborhood, asking the advice of Presbytery in a matter of difficulty concerning a house of worship. It would seem that Presbyterians and “people of the Church of England persuasion,” as the record

* See Appendix.

calls them, had united in building a house of worship, which stood on the spot now occupied by the Old Church School House, three or four miles east of the village. When the house was built, and how it was used, I have not been able to answer. Diligent search has not revealed one fact concerning it previous to 1738. Nor can it be ascertained when it ceased to be used as a house of worship; but it was long used as a school house. All traces of the house have now disappeared, except it may be a few timbers in some neighboring building, and the spot is only marked by a few neglected graves. But the trouble then concerned its use. Presbytery held an adjourned meeting at Cranbury to compose the difficulty, which was done by advising that one or the other party should sell out their right. The record does not state the fact, but it was evidently the Presbyterians who sold out, for they took measures the next year to build a new house. And for the site they came near the mill.

In July, 1739, James Rothead conveyed to Kort Van Vorhuys and Thomas Story a lot of ground adjoining the mill property "to be for the use of the Elders and Deacons of the Presbyterian Church of Cranbury," for erecting a house of worship. The sum paid was two pounds. From this record it appears that there was at this date a church with Elders and Deacons. For the men above named immediately conveyed the lot to Nicholas Steavens and Peter Perrine, Elders, and John Brown and William Magee, Deacons, of said church. But no record can be found of the organization of the

church. It may have been organized previous to this time, but it seems more probable that this took place immediately upon the separation from the Episcopalians, in 1738. The new building was erected in 1740, and stood in the old cemetery, on its highest point. And here it stood for forty-eight years. The church had no settled pastor for four years. But the people were not negligent of the means of grace, as at every meeting of Presbytery it is recorded, "Cranbury supplicated for supplies."

In June, 1741, Charles McKnight was taken under the care of the Presbytery of New Brunswick, and licensed, probably, in the fall of that year. He was called to Staten Island and Baskingridge, and to several other places. But he was not settled until called to Cranbury, in 1744. He was at the same time called to Allentown. It is a matter of interest, to the speaker at least, that the Rev. Timothy Symmes, great, great grandfather of your present pastor, was present as a member of Presbytery when the call was placed in Mr. McKnight's hands, and arrangements made for his installation; and Mr. McK. recommended Mr. S. to Woodbury. The installation took place at Allentown, July 18, 1744, the Rev. William Tennent, of Freehold, preaching the sermon, and the exercise was accompanied with fasting and prayer. There was a contest between the two places as to where the pastor should reside. But Cranbury had the preference, and it is conjectured for this reason: Mr. James Rothead was disposed to favor religion, and then owning the southwest section of the town, he probably offered terms

for the pastor's residence in the present parsonage, which decided his remaining in Cranbury. In the journal of David Brainerd, there is this record: "June 18, 1745. In the afternoon came to a place called Cranbury, and meeting with a serious minister, (Mr. McKnight) lodged with him." From this it may be inferred that Mr. McKnight, though not married, kept a house. And especially as this was not the only time Brainerd lodged with him. That a parsonage was needed is evident from a record actually entered upon the minutes of Presbytery for October 15, 1746, *viz*: "Mr. McKnight could not attend with the committee to instal Mr. Hunter, because he was absent marrying a wife." It was in 1746 that Brainerd removed to this vicinity with his Indians. A giant elm stood at the north end of the village, under which some of our forefathers heard the devoted missionary preach to his Indians. It has just fallen before the progress of improvement. Some few relics yet remain on the Indian Fields of the town of Bethel which Brainerd began, and his brother John completed. It is to the credit of the Cranbury pastor that the most friendly relations existed between him and those missionaries, leading them often to preach for each other.

But the dispute between Allentown and Cranbury, concerning the residence of the minister, became so strong that the Presbytery was called in to compose it, and did so by appointing a large committee, of whom John Brainerd was one. This committee met October 12, 1748, and was opened with a sermon by William Tennent. They advised that

the pastor should continue at Cranbury, and that Allentown should be allowed to employ a minister as soon as possible. But the double relation continued until 1756. The Rev. Mr. Snowden states, in a record written in 1791, that during all this time the Elders and Deacons in the two churches constituted but one session. But he states it as an uncertain thing, and it may well be doubted.

But now for forty years it is impossible to learn any particulars as to the state of the church, for either no records were kept, or they were lost. We can only learn a few facts from some legal documents and from records of Presbytery. From the last source we gather that Mr. McKnight was subjected to many trials at Cranbury, and hence he moved to Allentown in 1756. He was dismissed from Allentown in 1766, and settled at Shrewsbury and Middleton Point in 1767. It is indicative of the sentiments and influence of the man, that he was seized by the British during the Revolutionary war, and his church burned. He was released, and died soon after in New York, January 1, 1778, and was buried in Trinity churchyard, where his grave may be seen to this day.

Soon after Mr. McKnight left Cranbury, the people of that church called the celebrated Alex. McWhorter. Presbytery met at Cranbury, in July, 1759, to ordain Mr. McW., because he was under appointment of the Synod to go to Virginia, but instead of going to Virginia he was settled in Newark. This church was without a stated pastor until 1762, a space of six years. But there is constant notice of supplica-

tions to Presbytery for temporary supplies. And it is proof of the interest of the people in their church affairs, that it was during this vacancy that the parsonage property was purchased. Measures to this effect were taken early in 1758. The names of subscribers have come down to us on a worn and faded document.* The deed was given May 26, 1759, by George Job to John Steavens, John Tomson, and Leaford Haughout, calling for one hundred and fifty acres, for the sum of "Four Hundred and Twenty-five pounds current money of New Jersey." George Job had bought the property of James Rothead, in 1751. In 1770, this property was conveyed in trust to Charles Barclay, Joseph Clayton and Arthur Wycoff, and finally conveyed to the Trustees of this church, in 1790; which Trustees had only then become incorporated under the new law, consisting of Nathaniel Hunt, Jonathon Combs, Thomas McDowell, Jacob Fisher, Wm. Covenhoven, Samuel Longstreet and Humphrey Mount; and the instrument was signed in the presence of Timothy Horner and Corlis Lloyd. To complete the history of this matter, it is only necessary to be mentioned that the Trustees of this church, sold sixty acres of this tract in 1841. The remainder yet continues the property of the church.

In 1761, Thomas Smith was received into the Presbytery from that of Suffolk, and ordered to supply Cranbury. He was called here in 1762, and installed in October of that year. From all that can be gathered, Mr. Smith was a man of piety and

* See Appendix.

excellent spirit. But his health was very precarious, and his duties were many of them neglected, his name seldom appearing as present at meetings of Presbytery. How he performed his duties in the church can only be gathered from the fact that he left no records whatever. If Mr. McKnight left any records they were lost, and Mr. Smith's successor found nothing but a few loose scraps of paper, containing nothing of value. But that Mr. Smith was interested in the affairs of the church may be inferred from the fact that Presbytery met in Cranbury six or seven times during his pastorate. We may lament this loss of records, because we can know nothing of the state of the church during our war of independence. It is to be regretted because we can never recover a list of members and officers. It is more to be regretted, because the loss of marriage records has been in some instances a serious matter. We have still, on a time-stained sheet, the names of subscribers to Mr. Smith's support. A proposition to raise salary by assessing the pews had been voted down in 1750. And so a contract was drawn up, binding the subscribers, their heirs, executors and administrators, to pay the sums affixed, the largest being two pounds and the smallest six shillings. It was stipulated that Mr. Smith should preach every sixth Sabbath in the neighborhood of Cornelius Vorrise, which became the nucleus of the Dutch Neck Church. Whether this arrangement continued during Mr. Smith's pastorate does not appear.

The proposition of assessing the pews continued to be discussed until 1773, when it was adopted.

And we have a plan of the original church, drawn April 1st of that year, with the price attached—the highest being three pounds; and a tax for salary was levied on the pews, the highest being eighteen shillings. And the plan is a curiosity. The pulpit was on the north side of the church, in a square that rested on a long isle running east and west; there was a door at each end of this aisle. The main door was at the end of a short aisle, directly in front of the pulpit. The pews on each side of this short aisle, filling down the pulpit square, were placed lengthwise of the church, all the other pews across, and the gallery stairs opened out of doors.

It is a pleasing fact, as showing that amid the confusion of war, this church enjoyed the means of grace, that the Presbytery met in Cranbury, in April, 1778, in the midst of the exciting scenes of which New Jersey was then the theatre. And it is indicative of growth that it was under Mr. Smith's ministry a new house of worship was erected. The project was agitated several years before it was begun; indeed, preparations were made three years before the house was built. The old subscription list is still in existence, and shows that the first name, that of Charles Barclay, was signed December 13, 1785. The terms prove that it was intended the subscription should be good: "We, the under subscribers, do each one for himself, and not one as security for another, promise and oblige ourselves, our heirs, executors and administrators to pay, or cause to be paid, to Nathaniel Hunt, Esq., Treasurer of the Presbyterian Congregation of Cranbury, or to his successor in office," &c.

The house was not built until 1788, only the year before Mr. Smith's death. It was built where the present house now stands, and partly upon the very same foundations. Mr. Jacob Fisher, one of the Elders, was the builder. There is no hint as to the time of its dedication. The whole cost, at least the whole amount of subscriptions, was twelve hundred and forty-seven pounds.* The salary of the pastor had been sixty pounds until the movement for the new church, then it was raised to one hundred pounds, or five hundred dollars. It is certainly proof of *stability*, at least, on the part of our fathers that this salary of five hundred dollars was continued for seventy years, or until 1857.

Mr. Smith had long been infirm, his infirmities being of such a nature that he was often apprehensive that his end would come in a long and painful illness. He had often prayed that he might be spared such a trial, and that his end might be by some speedy method. And his prayer was mercifully answered, for on Wednesday evening, December 23, 1789, he was attending a prayer meeting at a private house—one that stood on the spot now occupied by the residence of Mr. Wm. M. Perrine—and while in the act of prayer he fell back into a chair and was carried home. There, apparently conscious, but unable to utter intelligible words, in two hours he gently fell asleep. His remains rest among the people for whom he labored, and among whom he died. His widow and a daughter, Miss Annie Smith, survived him many years, the former until

* See Appendix.

1817, the latter until 1844. It is greatly to the credit of that people, and yet was only what was proper should be done, that a regular annual stipend was provided for these relicts of a former pastor for so long a period after his death. Mr. Smith was thus pastor of this church a little more than twenty-seven years. And his labors, though interrupted, were not fruitless. His successor gathered up all he could of records, and gives a list of fifty persons admitted to the church during those years, eventful in the history of the country, if not of the church. And the number was doubtless greater than this.

After Mr. Smith's death the church depended upon temporary supplies, but only for a few months. During the following summer, Mr. Gilbert T. Snowden, a licentiate of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, frequently preached here, and on the 21st of September, 1790, he was called to the pastorate. On the 24th of November following Presbytery met at Cranbury to ordain and instal Mr. Snowden. Among those present on this occasion were Dr. Witherspoon, Dr. John Woodhull, Dr. Stanhope S. Smith and Dr. J. F. Armstrong, men long to be remembered, Dr Witherspoon being then, and Dr. Smith afterwards, President of Princeton College. Dr. Smith preached the sermon from 2 Tim. ii, 2, and Dr. Woodhull delivered the charges. Mr. Snowden was a man of more than ordinary abilities and piety. He devoted himself with great zeal and diligence to promote the interests of the church. He found all of its affairs in great disorder, and his first work was to arrange and settle them. Six new Elders and five

Deacons were ordained in less than two years after his settlement. His testimony is that he found that sound doctrine had been preached, and that the people relished such preaching. But pastoral visiting, catechising the children, and discipline had been almost entirely neglected, owing to infirmities, which Mr. Smith greatly lamented. From this time we have very full records. And from them one may be led to judge that Mr. Snowden entered upon the work of discipline with too much zeal. It is very certain this would be the judgment of some in our day when they read such a record as this: "The Session prohibited one member coming to the communion table, and gave her and another member an exhortation to use more gentle and decent language, and to keep from intermeddling with and speaking of her neighbor's affairs improperly."

Mr. Snowden instituted meetings of Session to be held on the first Monday of every month, to meet at 1 o'clock and adjourn at 5 o'clock, neither sooner nor later; and excuses for absence from these meetings were required, the fact of excuse being entered upon the records. The Session was composed of the Elders and Deacons. Accompanied with an Elder, Mr. Snowden made visits to his families, reporting to the monthly meeting the number visited, their circumstances and spiritual condition, and especially the numbers where the family altar was erected. Frequent days of fasting were appointed on account of the low state of religion; and once, at least, with reference to the yellow fever then raging in the near neighborhood. Tokens were ordered to be distrib-

uted among those desiring to come to the Lord's table. After lengthy discussions it was resolved by the Session that "singing in the church should be performed without giving out the line." But it was found that the people were opposed to the innovation, and so Mr. Ezekiel Price and Mr. William McChesney were sent for and engaged, "the former carefully and constantly to set the tune, and the latter to give out the line; for which the Session engaged to get them exempted from the salary they now pay." Six years afterwards, in 1799, the Session again called upon the people for a vote on this subject, when reading the line was dispensed with.

Mr. Snowden was greatly exercised during the whole of his short ministry with cases of discipline, some long and painful, some settled only after an appeal to Presbytery, and some bequeathed to his successor. It is one of the saddest lessons of history to read the story of the quarrels of those who now sleep together in the dust, and quarrels often about causes trivial as the small dust of the balance. The names of some who figured in scenes of strife you may now see yonder on stones crumbling away under the touch of time.

Mr. Snowden was not satisfied with the parsonage house, and so built himself a house—the one now occupied by Mr. Nelson Pette—and received the rent of the parsonage. But in December, 1793, he procured the adoption of a resolution "highly approving of the measure proposed to erect a dwelling house on the parsonage;" particularly as Mr. Snow-

den offered £40 towards it; and a meeting of the congregation was called "to attend to the business." Whether the meeting was held, or what further action was had, is not known. But this is certain, a new house was not erected. During the first years of Mr. Snowden's successor, the house was repaired, and the southern half added to it, and the house then became very much what it is now. A portion of it, then, must be considerably more than a hundred years old. But redolent of prayers, and sacred with associations, it would be almost sacrilege to pull it down.

Indefatigable worker as he was, Mr. Snowden's race was soon run. In November, 1796, he last met his Session, when he was zealously engaged in promoting the comfort of Rev. Mr. Smith's family. Soon after having occasion to visit New York, he returned ill with yellow fever, which spread great consternation. He was faithfully cared for, as well as the case would admit, by his servants, and by them carried to his last resting place, February 20, 1797. He, too, rests among the people among whom he spent the whole of his short ministerial life. A sermon was preached on the occasion of his death, by Dr. S. S. Smith, from Rev. xiv, 13, and his congregation paid every tribute of respect to his memory which a grateful people could pay to the memory of a faithful pastor.

Being thus suddenly deprived of their under-shepherd, the Session sent one of their number to solicit supplies from the Presbytery. Among those appointed by Presbytery to supply the vacancy was

George Spafford Woodhull, a son of Dr. John Woodhull, of Freehold. He had been licensed at a meeting of Presbytery held in Cranbury, November 14, 1797, and was appointed to supply at discretion. He performed the duty so much to the satisfaction of the people, that on the 6th day of March, 1798, a meeting of the congregation was held, which was opened with a sermon by Rev. Samuel F. Snowden, after which a unanimous call was voted to Mr. Woodhull to become the pastor of the church. The call was carried to Presbytery, by Messrs. Garrett Snedeker and Jonathan Combs, Jr. The ordination and installation took place on the 6th day of June, 1798. The text for Mr. Woodhull's trial sermon was Ex. xx, 8, showing the care that was exercised in the observance of the Sabbath. Rev. James F. Armstrong preached the sermon, and Dr. John Woodhull again delivered the charges. Mr. Woodhull remained several years unmarried, during which time the parsonage house was repaired and enlarged. He found the church in a much more vigorous and effective state than was the case with his predecessor. And he seems to have continued in exercise the system of order and chatechetical instruction and visitation introduced by Mr. Snowden. Cases of discipline were not so numerous, and the church increased more rapidly in numbers. The Lord's Supper continued to be administered four times in the year, according to the custom established by Mr. Snowden. Previous to his time there had been no regular seasons. It is recorded that on the 8th of May, 1803, there was a snow storm of such

severity that the administration of the Lord's Supper was deferred to the third Sabbath of June. Early in the next pastorate the custom of holding three communion seasons in the year was established, and still continues.

In 1817, Mrs. Smith departed this life, having survived her husband nearly thirty years. The expenses of her last illness and funeral were defrayed by the Session. Dr. Woodhull having been pastor of this church for twenty-two years, in April, 1820, determined to accept a call from the church in Princeton. He remained there for twelve years, when he removed to Middletown Point. Here he had labored but two years when an attack of scarlet fever ended his life on the 25th of December, 1834, and here his remains were laid to rest. His memory is still spoken of with affectionate respect by many in this community. His sojourn among this people was pleasant to himself, and his labors were fruitful of much good.

During this time there was residing at Lamington, James Henry, a colonel in the New Jersey militia. On the 7th of June, 1797, the year Mr. Snowden died, a son, and his only one, was born to Colonel Henry, whom he named Symmes Cleves, for his brother-in-law, Judge John Cleves Symmes. This son early entered Princeton College, graduating there in 1815, at the age of eighteen. He was brought to a knowledge of Christ during the remarkable revival in college of 1815, to which many eminent men of God date their spiritual birth. He entered at once the Seminary at Princeton, where he gradu-

ated in 1818. He was licensed the previous year, October, 1817, by the Presbytery of Newton, being but little more than twenty years of age. After filling various temporary engagements in Massachusetts, New York, Philadelphia and Virginia, he returned to Princeton, in 1820. Here he received simultaneous calls from Cranbury and New Brunswick. He chose to accept the former. The messenger to carry this call to Presbytery was Mr. George Morris, who served in the Eldership forty-three years, and thus stands one among the six who served for more than forty years. The installation took place August 8, 1820. The youthful pastor entered upon his work with the ardor and zeal of youth. He introduced changes, but did not spare himself. He immediately discontinued the ancient practice of having two sermons, with a short intermission between them. It was a practice well suited to a newly settled country, where the opportunities for hearing the gospel preached were rare ; but not suited to a well established community, where such opportunities are abundant. And, moreover, not better suited to mental digestion than two closely connected dinners are to the physical. But this discontinuance was not from indisposition to labor, for the young pastor was abundant in labors, preaching in the different neighborhoods on the Sabbath afternoons, and on the evenings through the week. Indeed, so incessant were these labors, and so great the exposure incurred, that here was laid the foundation of the affection that terminated his life. But there was joyful occasion for these

labors, for during the first years of his ministry the church enjoyed the most powerful and extensive revival of religion she had yet seen. Within ten years after his settlement, the church had more than doubled her membership—the number admitted during that period being 228. This growth continued until the church was filled to overflowing, and a diversity of sentiment arose with reference to the building of a new house of worship. This diversity resulted in the formation of the Second Church of Cranbury, which was organized by a committee of Presbytery, June 8, 1838. And this result, it is now plainly to be seen, was ordered in the wisdom of God for the furtherance of the kingdom of his Son. None now can fail to see that this was just what was needed. A full church must either extend its growth beyond its own borders, or decline. It is not for me to follow the history of the Second Church, further than to say that calling the Rev. J. W. Blythe it went rapidly forward in a vigorous growth, and side by side with the mother church, we feel that we are almost as one congregation, with two houses of worship. And in less than thirty years they present a combined membership of nearly nine hundred.

In the next year, 1839, those who remained in the old church resolved on rebuilding their house of worship. They retained the old frame, and added to it considerably. The work was finished so that the dedication services were held on the first day of January, 1840, Dr. Archibald Alexander preaching the sermon.

Thence the affairs of the church moved quietly and prosperously along until 1857, when the church was again bereft of her under-shepherd. In the midst of preparing a sermon on the text, "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord," Dr. Henry was called to attend a funeral. In this service he took a violent cold, which at once fastened upon the infirmity in his throat that was contracted thirty years before, developing into an inflammation of the bronchial membrane. He at once recognized his approaching end, though none around him were alarmed. On the following Sabbath afternoon, March 22, 1857, while his people were assembled in his church, having taken a farewell look at this lower world, he walked calmly to his bed, and taking there his accustomed place, he looked up and beheld the gates of heaven opened to receive him, and passed away as gently as a child falls to sleep in its mother's arms. On the succeeding Thursday his well-beloved and loving people followed his remains to the grave; and instantly turned their eyes upon his son-in-law, the Rev. Joseph G. Symmes, then of Madison, Ind., to fill the vacant place. And here, as the history of the sixth pastorate is not yet completed, it is becoming and proper for me to stop.

Let me conclude this sketch with a reference to two facts in the history of this church that are remarkable, or, at least, are matters of thanksgiving. One is that this church, though one hundred and thirty years old, has had but six pastors, and no stated supply; Mr. Smith and Mr. Woodhull each served a few months as supply, but it was only as a

trial for a pastorate. There was, indeed, a space of six years, after Mr. McKnight left, when there was no pastor, but the people more than once called for one, and the Session was constantly appearing in Presbytery supplicating temporary supplies. There seemed to be no disposition to have a minister among them except as regularly settled. And then, for more than a hundred years, this is the record: Mr. Smith was settled in 1762, and died December 23, 1789; Mr. Snowden was installed November 24, 1790, and died February 20, 1797; Dr. Woodhull was installed June 6, 1798, and left April, 1820; Dr. Henry was installed August 8, 1820, and died March 22, 1857; and the present pastor was installed May 28, 1857. It is seldom such a close succession in the pastoral office can be found for so long a period.

Another fact, which, though not remarkable, is very pleasing, is this: the growth of this church has been steady and constant. This is especially true of the last seventy-five years. We have no record of the growth back of 1790. But in that year Mr. Snowden found fifty members, thence onward there was no year that failed to record admissions to the membership—the average since 1800 being eighteen for each year, and seldom below ten in any one of them. The characteristic has been constant growth, rather than remarkable periods of growth, though the number of admissions ran up to fifty-four in 1828, to seventy-three in 1858, and to sixty in 1859. This is the law of life which the Lord has imposed upon his church. And in this church the necessary and expected result has been an extension outward and beyond its own borders.

Colonies have gone out to form the following churches, in whole or in part : Spottswood Reformed (Dutch) Church ; Dutch Neck, organized in 1816 ; Millstone, organized in 1826 ; Second Cranbury, 1838 ; Jamesburg, 1854 ; Manalapan, 1856, and Hightstown, 1857, and a new church is crytalizing at Dayton. Besides these, churches in other denominations have grown up within the field at first occupied by this mother church, with whom the relations have always been pleasant. There was a Baptist church planted in this village in the year 1749. In 1788 it was removed to Hightstown, where it has grown into a large and flourishing congregation. Methodist churches have been planted, one at Planisboro ; one at Hightstown, removed from Milford to Hightstown about thirty years ago, and one in Cranbury in 1847—the last two flourishing churches.

It may be interesting, and perhaps is not out of place, to add that ten years ago the membership of this chnrch numbered 265—now 480. There have been added 350 to its communion ; 385 funeral services have been attended ; there have been 352 persons baptized, and 149 marriage ceremonies performed.

Well may we, then, improve the occasion of this day to render thanksgiving unto our God for all the way of mercy in which he has led us. And we cannot more appropriately, nor acceptably, render our thanksgiving than by taking the resolution, each for himself, and acting upon it : “ He is my God, and I will prepare him a habitation ; my fathers’ God, and I will exalt Him.”

APPENDIX.

LIST OF PASTORS.

<i>Name.</i>	<i>Installed.</i>	<i>Dismissed.</i>	<i>Deceased.</i>
Charles McKnight.....	July 18, 1744	Oct. 26, 1756	Jan. 1, 1778
Thomas Smith.....	Oct. 19, 1762	.....	Dec. 23, 1789
Gilbert Tennent Snowden..	Nov. 24, 1790	.....	Feb. 20, 1797
George Spafford Woodhull.	June 6, 1798	April, 1820	Dec. 25, 1834
Symmes Cleves Henry.....	Aug. 8, 1820	.....	M'ch 22, 1857
Joseph Gaston Symmes....	May 28, 1857	.....	.....

LIST OF RULING ELDERS.

For the first fifty years there is an imperfection in the record of Elders that cannot now be corrected.

<i>Name.</i>	<i>Ordained.</i>	<i>Dismissed.</i>	<i>Deceased.</i>
Nicholas Stephens.....	July, 1744.	.....	.....
Peter Perrine.....	" "	.....	.....
Robert English.....	" "	.....	.....
John Tomson.....	" "	.....	.....
Matthias Mount.....	" "	.....	April 7, 1791
Jonathan Combs.....	July, 1748.	.....	Oct. 29, 1800
Samuel Bailey.....	" "	.....	M'ch 15, 1802
Cornelius Arvin .....	" "	.....	Nov. 6, 1791.
Jonathan Combs, Jr.....	April 2, 1791.	.....	May, 1803.
William Perrine.....	April 2, 1791	.....	Sept'r, 1820.
Jacob Fisher .....	" " "	.....	March, 1837.
Humphrey Mount.....	Dec. 12, 1792	.....	Sept. 27, 1801
Garrett Snedeker.....	" " "	.....	Aug. 1, 1825.
Matthias Mount, Jr.....	" " "	.....	Dec. 22 1807
John Slayback.....	" " "	Nov. 5, 1816.	.....

LIST OF RULING ELDERS—(Continued).

<i>Name.</i>	<i>Ordained.</i>	<i>Dismissed.</i>	<i>Deceased.</i>
Isaac Snowden.....	{ Installed Aug. 1798.	Sept'r, 1806.	.....
John Mount.....	Oct. 14, 1802.	.....	——, 1804.
Enos Baldwin.....	" " "	.....	April, 1821.
Thomas Allen.....	Oct. 13, 1804.	June 13, 1805	.....
Israel Baldwin.....	" " "	—— 1825	.....
Henry Stults.....	Oct. 16, 1813.	.....	Oct. 3. 1832.
Richard Reid.....	" " "	May, 1827.	.....
George Morris.....	" " "	.....	Jan. 4, 1856.
Abraham Bergen.....	" " "	.....	April 12, 1826
John Davison.....	October, 1821	.....	Dec. 20, 1831
Derrick Griggs.....	" "	.....	June 2, 1841.
John Dey.....	" "	.....	M'ch 12, 1847
Thomas Duncan.....	May 7, 1826.	.....	April 7, 1855.
John Stonaker.....	" " "	.....	April, 1837.
Lewis W. Dey.....	" " "	.....	April 9, 1855.
Christopher Bergen.....	" " "	.....	Dec. 24, 1844.
Elias Dey.....	Oct. 3, 1829.	June 28, 1838	.....
Aaron Lane.....	" " "	" " "	.....
Jacob Snedeker.....	Oct. 3, 1829.	June 28, 1838	.....
Peter C. Bergen.....	" " "	M'ch 1, 1857.	.....
Jacob Stults.....	Nov. 28, 1841	.....	April, 1854.
Richard McDowell.....	" " "	.....	.....
Peter Johnson Dey.....	" " "	.....	Dec. 9, 1864.
Andrew M. Duncan.....	Nov. 11, 1855	.....	Feb. 9, 1860.
John J. Applegate.....	" " "	.....	.....
Derrick Griggs Perrine.....	" " "	.....	.....
Matthias M. Perrine.....	Jan. 15, 1860.	.....	.....
Henry H. Stults.....	" " "	.....	.....
Neilson L. Forman.....	" " "	.....	June 28, 1865
Stephen T. Duncan.....	" " "	.....	.....

THE NAME.

The name of the fruit, cranberry, is of Scotch origin. It was called craneberry, from a real or fancied resemblance of its stem to the neck of the crane, and was modified by dropping the "e." It was the emblem, in Scotland, of the Grant Clan. The name was, undoubtedly, given to the stream on which our village stands, from the fact that the berries were found upon its meadows. And when applied to a stream, or meadow, or prairie, the correct spelling is Cranberry. But there is no reason or meaning in that spelling as applied to a town. The old English custom, which our early fathers, of course, followed, was to call a district or town a *borough*, which was contracted into *burg* or *bury*, according to whichever they thought sounded best. Hence the ending of many names of towns, both in England and in this country, as Canterbury, Woodbury, Danbury, Williamsburg, Jamesburg—never spelled *berry*. When this village began to grow up, the natural method was to call it Cranberry borough or town; the *berry* would be dropped, and there would be Cranborough, or, contracting it, Cranbury. And so the old documents and records, which were written by those who knew how to spell, or were careful in spelling, have the name Cranbury. The origin of the name, its proper meaning, and the best authority in spelling, make it Cranbury. *Cranberry* suggests to strangers a low, swampy, sandy country, which this is not. It is possible, on some spots along the brook, to raise the fruit. But the surrounding country is adapted to almost anything better than to that purpose. Let us have the correct, respectable, historical spelling for our pleasant little village.

I have thought that one or two lists of names would be interesting to the people of this community. And, besides, the lists are worthy of preservation.

NAMES OF SUBSCRIBERS FOR THE PARSONAGE—1758.

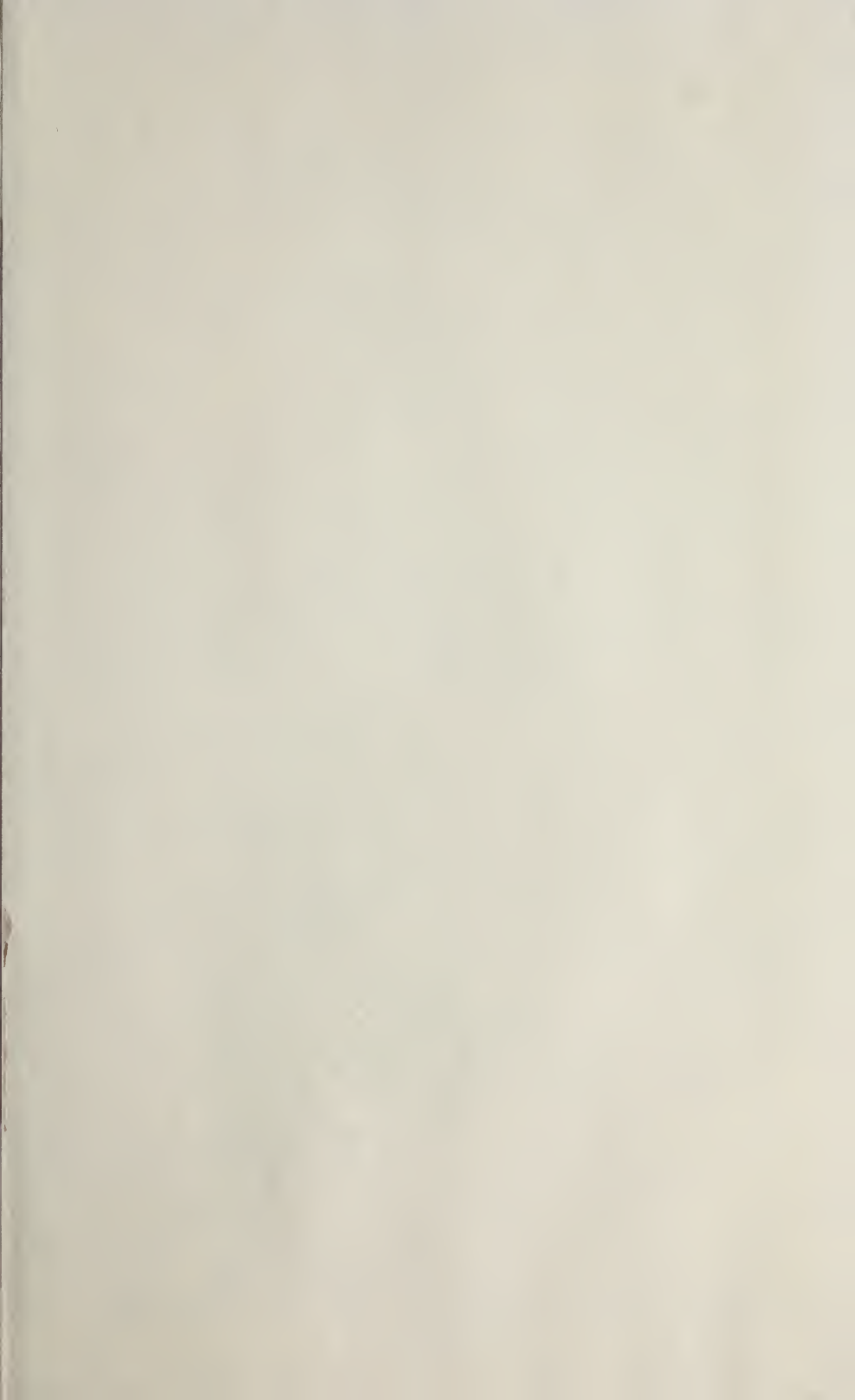
John Hume,	James Gaston,	Euphamiah Wilson,
Jonathan Combs,	Barney Karney,	Nathan Davis,
Leaford Haughhawout	Henry Swinler,	Matthias Mount,
John Steavens,	Joseph Clayton,	Elizabeth Clun,
Peter Perrine,	Charles Barclay,	Eliza Swain,
Samuel Bayles,	Isaac Davis,	Peter Covenhoven,
John Sutphen,	Robert Davison,	William Dorrance,
Duncan Campbell,	George Davison,	John Tomson, Jr.,
Lucas Schanck,	William Davison,	Adam Newell,
John Muirhead,	Andrew Davison,	John Reed,
Ram Vanderbeek,	Cornelius Voorhies,	John Carson,
Stephen Vorhes,	Coert Voorhies,	David Gilliland,
Peter Bonham,	Zachariah Gapen,	Nehemiah Suttan,
Adrian Bennett,	Samuel Kerr,	Eleanor Gilliland,
James Mulligan,	Daniel Disbrow,	Elizabeth Wright,
William Chela,	Richard Jewell,	Joseph Story,
John Story,	John Gordon,	James Peters,
Joseph Wilson,	Catorene Disbrow,	Cornelius Carhart,
Richard Sparks,	Arthur Vankirk,	Nicholas Britton,
Thomas Story,	Albert Cortleyou,	Thomas Mershon,
Charles McLean,	Barnet Griggs,	John Chapman,
John Jewell,	Benjamin Griggs,	Cornelius Wyckoff,
John Soden,	William Guest,	James English,
Barent Hegeman,	Stephen Ketcham,	Hugh McCullom,
Robert Magee,	Andrew Wilson,	John Gaston,
Matthias Vankirk,	John Johnston,	Thomas Mount,
Arthur Wicoff,	Menke Peters,	John Stephenson,
John Tomson,	John Kerr, Jr.,	William Cole,
Tobias Neiphews,	John Faris,	William Magee,
Stephen Pangborn,	Thomas Dier,	Luke Smock,
Richard Major,	Lines Pangborn,	John Wetherell.

NAMES OF SUBSCRIBERS TO THE FUND FOR ERECTING A NEW CHURCH BUILDING.

The subscription was begun in 1785, almost immediately after the war, and the building was erected in 1788.

Charles Barclay,	Matthew Griggs,	Samuel Kerr,
James Gaston,	Henry Wagner,	Jacob G. Bergen,
William Covenhoven,	Cornelius Arvin,	Josiah Skelton,
William Smith,	John Mount,	Reuben Davison,
David Chambers,	Humphrey Mount,	John Duncan,
Reuben Morris,	Peter Covenhoven,	John Erwin,
John Perrine,	Peter Gulick,	William Sloan,
Elias Lovberry,	Richard Handley,	Anna Chambers,
Andrew Rowan,	Nathaniel Hunt,	John Wicoff,
William Dey,	George McAvoy,	Jacob Wicoff,
John Gulick,	Peter Bergen,	Thomas Mershon,
Benj. Van Derbeek,	Dr. Stites (a bell),	Robert Mershon,
Andrew Applegate, Jr	Samuel Bayles,	William Perrine,
Elijah Perrine,	William J. Davison,	Thomas McDowell,
Henry Stults,	Paul Miller, Jr.,	Andrew McDowell,
Ruliff Cortelyou,	Stephen Voorhees,	Jemima Griggs,
Henry Cortleyou,	Else Schenck,	Anthony Danton,
Abraham Van Hise,	John Stults,	Jonathan Combs, Sr.,
Mary Egbourt,	Matthias Mount, Jr.,	Daniel Sparling,
Joshua Ely,	Daniel Lott,	John Davison, Jr.,
William Davison,	Isaac Snedichor,	Charles Roberson,
John Slaback,	Cornelius Messler, Sr.,	George Tomson,
David Stout,	David Williamson,	William Jewell,
Peter Cammer,	Jonathan Combs, Jr.,	John Jourdan,
James Journey,	James Hulick,	Cornelius Hulick,
Joseph Mount,	Matthias Gilliland,	John Snedichor,
John Davison, Sen.,	David Gilliland,	John Reed,
Joseph Riggs,	Daniel Stover,	Hezekiah Mount,
Peter Perrine,	Peter Hulfish,	Vinson Carterline,
Samuel Longstreet,	Samuel Bayles, Jr.,	Luke Smock,
Samuel Applegate,	Cornelius Johnston,	Zebulon Morford,
Garrett Voorhees,	Widow Wicoff,	Garrett J. Snedichor,
James Dey,	John Wetherell,	Hendrick Barkalow,
Peter Barclay,	John Sutphen,	John Sutphen,
John Davison, Sen.,	Aaron Van Pelt,	Benjamin Ashley,
John Story, Jr.,	John Casman,	Peter C. Covenhoven,

Lewis Barclay,	Nathan Davis,	Matthias Johnson,
Farrington Barkalow,	Joseph Dey,	William Johnson,
John Van Dyke,	John Dey,	Koert Voorhies,
Henry Applegate,	Wm. D. Perrine,	Jacob Deremer,
William Palmer,	Israel Baldwin,	Peter Deremer,
Elnathan Baldwin,	Jane Bordine,	William Gordon,
Oke Hendrickson,	James Barclay,	Anna Deremer,
Elisha Jewell,	James Moore,	Garrett Snedikor,
George Davison,	Bernard Moore,	Hendrick Lott,
Lippincott South,	John Davis,	Thomas Appleget,
Cornelius Hendrickson	Isaac Davis,	Abraham Lott,
John Sutphen,	James Freeman,	John Stonaker,
John Suttan,	John Fisher,	Widow Wetherell,
Robert Wiley,	Daniel Ashley,	Rochard Slover,
David Brotherton,	Jacobus Hegeman,	Peter Stults,
Isaac Perrine,	Francis Vaune,	Abraham Sclover,
Orre Bennett,	John Marlen,	Joel Job,
Isaac Van Hise,	Nicholas Britton,	Isaac Van Pelt,
Joseph Applegate,	Isaac Britton,	Isaac Debow,
Joseph Journey,	Robert McGhee,	Thomas Nixon,
Joseph Perrine,	William McGhee,	John Van Kirk,
Timothy Horner,	William Britton,	James Perrine,
Benjamin Luker,	Thomas Slack,	Benjamin Griggs,
David Luker,	William Covenhoven,	Hendrick Hoagland,
Samuel Van Kirk,	Anthony Applegate,	Joachim Van Arsdale,
Benjamin Luker, Jr.,	Enos Baldwin,	Cornelius Van Arsdale,
William Jordan,	Woolsay Baldwin,	David Wortman,
Nehemiah Sutton,	Richard Job,	Cornelius Cruser,
Henry Disbrow,	Daniel Bayles,	Samuel Disbrow,
Andrew Morehead,	Peter Arven,	James Myrick,
Thomas Allen,	Thomas Soden,	James Reed,
Peter Job,	John Story.	



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